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THE HERO OF THE CAMERON DAM



OR SKETCH OF
JOHN F. DEITZ

and his struggle with
the Lumber Companies

by Axel Gustafson, Ph. D.
Author of *The Foundation of Death*, Etc.

PRICE 25 CENTS

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OF THE

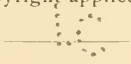
CAMERON DAM

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THE LUMBER COMPANIES

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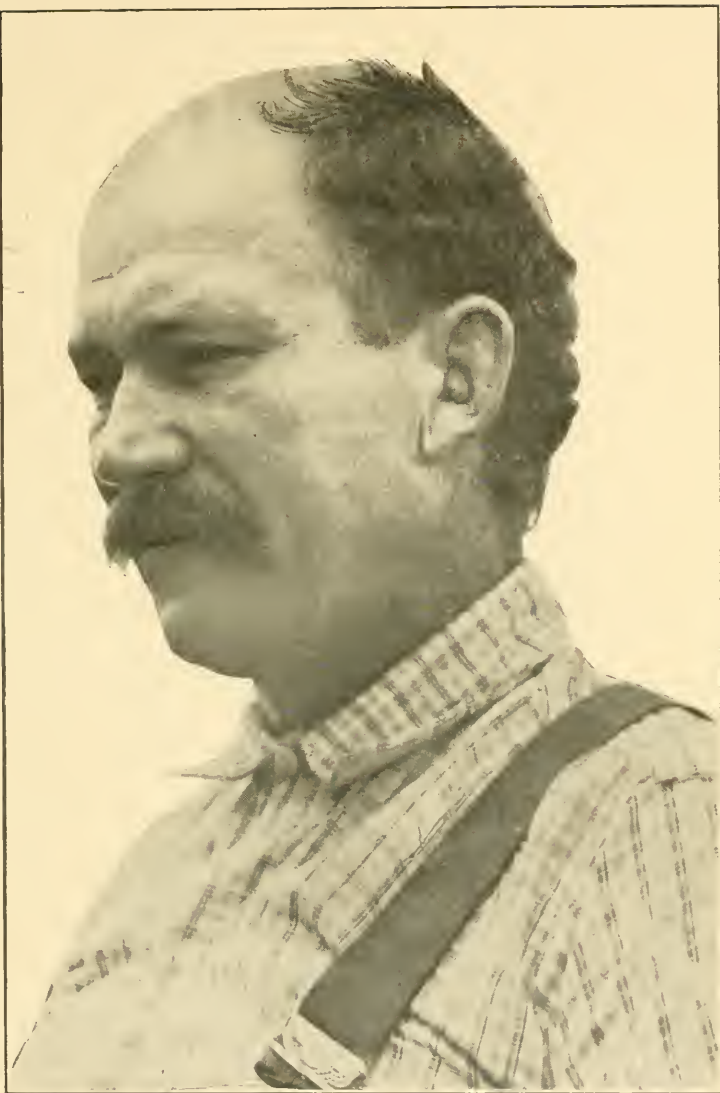
This story of the life of John F. Deitz is authorized and endorsed by the Deitz Defense Committee and published for the purpose of raising funds to secure the best legal talent for the defense of John F. Deitz and his family.

“Under present conditions, the poor man is at a woeful disadvantage in a legal contest with a corporation or a rich opponent. The necessity for the reform exists, both in the United States Courts, and in all State Courts.”

From President Taft's Annual Message
to Congress, Tuesday, Dec. 6, 1910.



The Co-operative
Printery,
344 Sixth Street,
Milwaukee.



Courtesy Milwaukee Journal.

John F. Deitz

The Hero of Cameron Dam, whom the authorities commanded by the Weyerhaeuser Lumber Trust are trying to railroad to a felon's cell for life because he defended his home, his family and himself from official and officially hired assassins.

FOREWORD.

There is an instinct, well nigh indestructible, enthroned in the human breast, which we commonly name justice or fair play.

As this instinct has been dominant in human affairs, has humanity progressed and prospered; and, on the other hand, wherever and to the extent that this innate demand for justice and fair play has been denied, has humanity suffered and deteriorated.

The basic foundation of our government rests on that demand. Our Declaration of Independence in revolutionary terms voices it. Our federal constitution and all the constitutions of the several states, that of Wisconsin included, as well as all other statutory laws, both state and national, are framed with that fundamental end in view. All their injunctions, prohibitions and punitive provisions have been professedly passed for the purpose of insuring, protecting and safeguarding this innate claim to justice and fair play under all conditions to all and every human being living within the boundaries of these United States of America. It is in the name of this basic right of humanity, on the strength of its recognition in all our legislation, that Deitz' friends demand a fair trial; it is to this spirit in America that Mr. Deitz and his family, and we who are pleading their cause, are directing our appeal to secure it for him.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

The facts of John F. Deitz's six years' battle against the Chippewa Falls and Mississippi Valley Lumber Companies hereby presented to the public, have been obtained from personal interviews with members of the Deitz family, corroborated by parties who know Mr. Deitz and who have lived for years in those regions of Wisconsin. Valuable material has also been gathered from the files of Wisconsin newspapers, such as the Milwaukee Journal, Milwaukee Times, Ashland News, Sheboygan Daily Press, Fond du Lac Bulletin, Hayward Enterprise, and especially the so-called Deitz edition of the Osceola Sun, published October 25, 1906.

INTRODUCTORY.

The true story of John F. Deitz's tribulations because he has stood up for his rights regardless of consequences, is as pathetic and tragic as the tale of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Uncle Tom's case was typical of the fate meted out to a colored slave who dared to live true to his conviction at the cost of his life. The case of John F. Deitz is typical of what a poor homesteader in the north woods must endure if he dares to assert his legal rights in opposition to the Mississippi Valley-Weyerhaeuser Lumber Trust. Uncle Tom was whipped to death for refusing to yield to the foul commands of Legree; and, unless a righteous indignation throughout the land saves John F. Deitz, he will probably end his life in a felon's cell, for no other reason than that he defended his family, his home and himself from official and officially hired assassins.

And the marvelous escapes from death by all the members of the family—save a child who died after drinking water drawn from a well poisoned by an Indian employee of the Chippewa Lumber Company—unmistakeably points to a superior power holding its protecting hand over this little band of heroes. During the persecution of Deitz, two sheriffs, sooner than execute the vile demands of the courts and county board, have resigned. And one sheriff, Mr. Peterson, who has just died at the Ashland Hospital, not only was dismissed because he refused to persecute Deitz, but fined \$1,000 and put in jail for three months for neglect of duty.

Northern Wisconsin is rich in fertile fields. It should be inhabited by a large, prosperous and happy population, but instead it is sparsely populated, largely an uninhabited wilderness, and all simply because the arrogant lumber companies make slaves of those who enter these regions or else drive them away. It ought to be to the interest of the whole state of Wisconsin to vigorously support Mr. Deitz in his unequal battle with these corporations to secure a fair chance for the farmer and homesteader who settles up there.

CHAPTER I.

The Early Life of John F. Deitz.

John is of German origin, a native of Wisconsin, about 50 years of age. He has passed the greater part of his life in Sawyer county, chiefly at Rice Lake. He has filled several official positions in that place and for twenty years was a justice of the peace in that community. There he married and has now a family of six living children.

The Hayward Election of 1902.

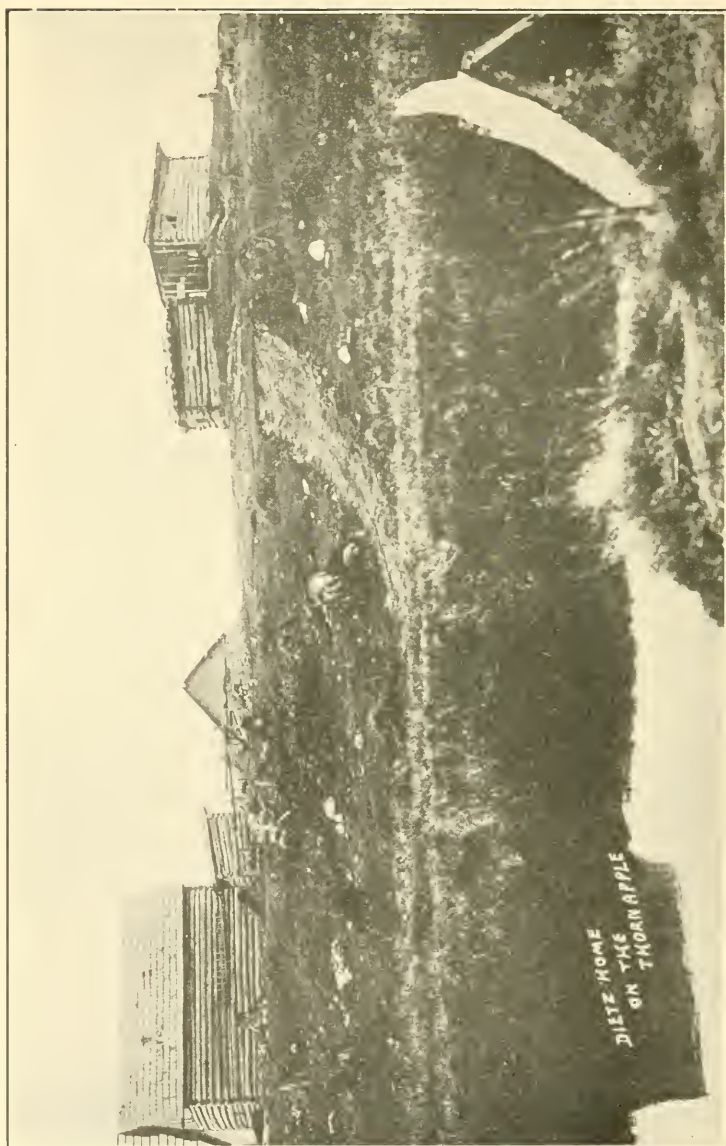
In the spring of 1902 Deitz journeyed to Hayward to cast his first vote in that place. Owing to the disturbed political condition of the community, he was appointed a deputy sheriff.

For a long time the lumber companies had elected their henchmen as officers of Sawyer county. The Hayward gang of grafters ruled the whole county. (Hayward is called the "Robbers' Roost.") At that time the people had become disgusted. They demanded a change. In the election it soon became apparent that the gang would be turned out.

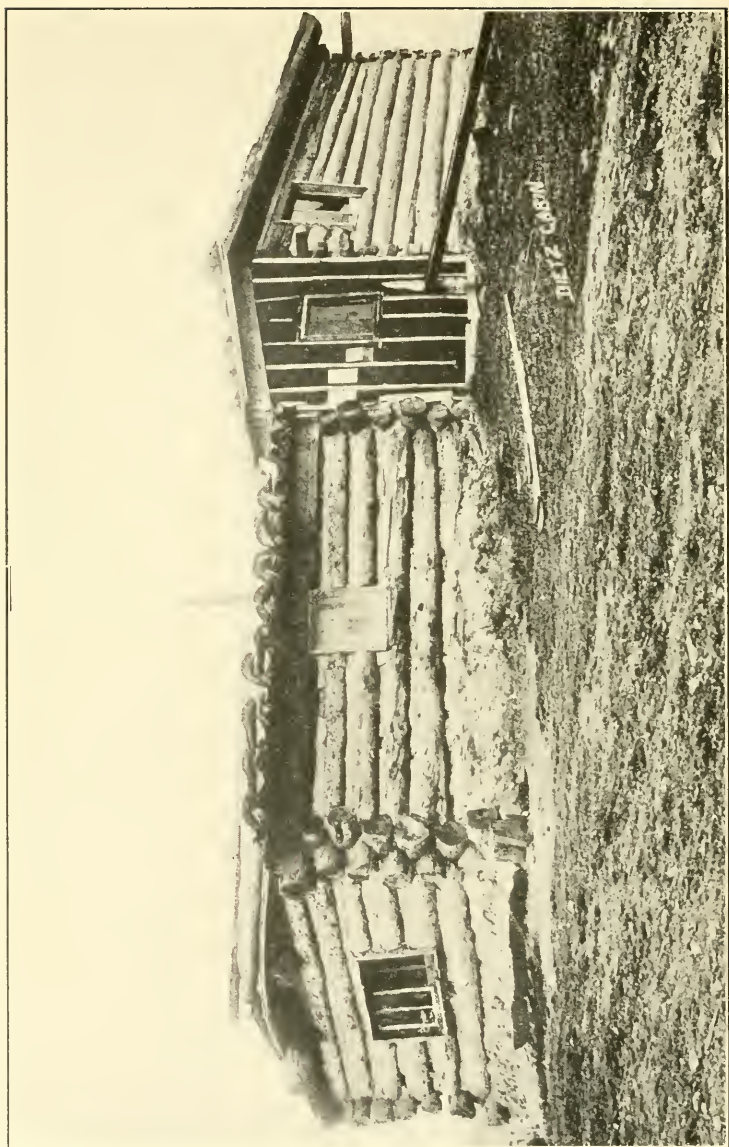
As that election was destined to have such a fateful influence upon Deitz's life, I condense the graphic description of that election furnished by W. E. Schei, editor of the Hayward Enterprise, in the Osceola Sun, October 25, 1906:

"The better class of citizens, long denied a voice in the affairs of town and county government, succeeded by a united front at the polls in electing a full set of town officers from Hayward's best men."

Notwithstanding the overwhelming majority given to every man on this ticket, the officials doggedly hung to their offices. Not even waiting for a complete counting of the ballots, each of them hastened to the town clerk's office to checkmate by that move any contemplated action on the



part of the victors to take the offices contested for, and directed their healers at the polls to cease counting and lock the boxes. Throughout the night the excitement was intense. On the following day, Sheriff William Giblin cried for blood, and but for the cool head of John F. Deitz and other men of his stamp, it probably would have been shed. The people gathered at the town hall, chose Deitz as their spokesman. For four hours he pleaded and finally won, but Sheriff Giblin and Deputy Sheriff Madden—the same brute who has stained the name of Wisconsin with his infamies against the Deitz family—drunk with liquor, enraged over the settlement, tried to create a riot as a cause for calling for troops, but Deitz's coolness and tact foiled that attempt. In making the settlement of the election trouble, Deitz foresaw this danger and made demand for personal charge of the sheriff. So when Giblin telegraphed for troops Deitz countermanded his order, telling the Governor that the election trouble had been peaceably settled. Still the sheriff and his gang demanded either the offices or a riot. Deitz watched his man, however, and once when he made a threatening move towards his hip pocket Deitz brought him to his senses with a lightning slap. By his rare tact, courage and manliness Deitz won that election for good government. His signal victory over the gang made him both feared and hated. First they tried to corrupt him, and when they failed they swore his destruction. Since that time except for a visit to the town meeting, where he disarmed a man who tried to kill him, Deitz has rarely visited Hayward, and has taken no active part in its political campaigns.



CHAPTER II.

The Cameron Dam Struggle.

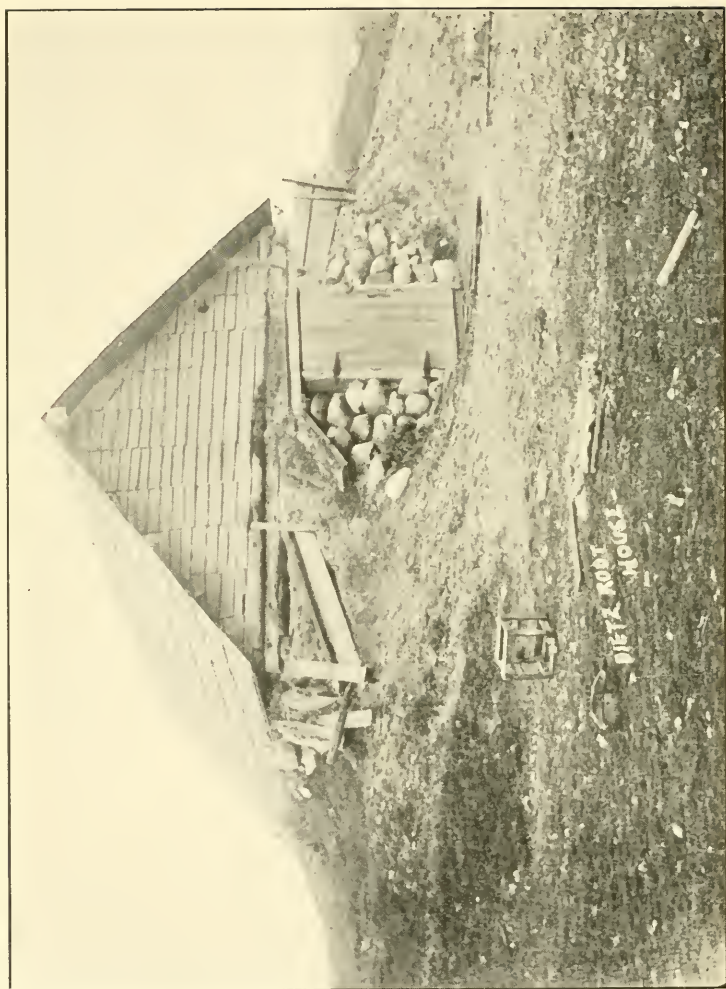
The Case of the Lumber Companies.

During all these years the lumber companies have maintained a special press bureau at Chippewa Falls for the purpose of discrediting Deitz and his case with the public at large. The falsehoods thus spread have been strengthened by the enunciations in court of two judges branding Deitz as an anarchist and an outlaw.

The companies declare that they are the rightful owners of the dam; that Deitz is a half savage, a bravado, a dead shot, always ready to pick off anybody who approaches his fortifications without search and permit; that he has defied the courts, killed deputies sent to serve notice of injunctions or with warrants for his arrest; that, finally, the county having suffered this lawless state for years, its officials determined to put an end to it. But to prevent useless shedding of blood, the Governor offered Deitz an honorable compromise, which he flatly rejected; that then he was overpowered, taken prisoner with the rest of his family and put in jail; and that now they will have to bear the full penalty of the law.

The Truth of the Matter.

Until the time that Mr. Deitz moved to Cameron Dam, as we have seen before, he bore an excellent reputation, and demonstrated signally his good sense, honor, manhood and patriotism. These charges by the company, therefore, should require strong affirmation before people ought to believe that Mr. Deitz had become so different a man from what he had been in the past. It is well, therefore, for us to carefully examine these various points and charges preferred against him by the companies and the courts.



Those "Fortifications."

The companies declare that Deitz was entrenched in a veritable fortress. Here is an exact description of those fortifications. The cabin, an ordinary lumberman's log hut, consists of four rooms, one used as kitchen and living room, the others as bedrooms. There is no tree or particle of shelter around the building. Any marksman could hide among the heavy timber of the company's land, which lies only a hundred feet east of the Deitz farm, and pick off the members of the family without danger to himself. There are no barricades on doors or windows, not even a bolt for the door—only an ordinary wooden button. There is a barn some distance from the hut and also a root house. But neither of these buildings possess any indication of being constructed for or provided with defenses of any kind.

Mr. Deitz's Character.

Many people have visited Mr. Deitz's hospitable cabin, where everybody finds the latch string outside for their reception. All declare that his home life is unblemished: that he is a kind father and loving husband, his children well educated and behaved. Those in Sawyer county who have known him for years say that he is a man of peace, the soul of honor, absolutely truthful, incorruptible and fearless. A firm believer in destiny, Deitz does not think that any protective steps he can take will either hasten or delay his demise an instant. Hence he doesn't believe in "fortifications." He goes about his work as unconcerned as though everything were peaceful. Neither he nor his boys carry a gun while at work. He relies solely upon God, his good cause, his knowledge of the woods and two faithful dogs.



Courtesy Milwaukee Journal.

Clarence Deitz with head bandaged, after being wounded by Rogich

CHAPTER III.

The Ownership of Cameron Dam.

The lumber company asserts that the purchase of the hundred and sixty acres on the Thornapple Creek by Mrs. Deitz did not include the possession of the dam. Let us see how this tallies with facts.

In the summer of 1900 Mrs. H. E. Deitz entered into negotiations with a Mrs. Jemie Cameron for the purchase of a two hundred acre homestead lot, including a dam on the borders of the Thornapple Creek. This dam had been built by lumbermen years ago to hold the water back for the floating out of cut logs. Mrs. Cameron gave Mrs. Deitz a clear warranty deed, dating back to 1867, for one hundred and sixty acres; having failed to pay taxes on the remaining forty acres during the current year, she could not transfer them immediately.

The warranty deed for the hundred and sixty acres given by Mrs. Cameron to Mrs. Deitz had previously been approved in two probate courts. No one having appeared to contest the right of transfer, by the laws of the state, all parties were "forever debarred" thereafter from contesting its validity. Later on that deed was also duly certified by Abstractor Ralph Tilstad, testifying that "There are no unredeemed tax sales of taxes due and unpaid against said land except as noted. There are no unsatisfied judgments entered against any party named in said abstract in any court of record having their records in said county, which are a lien on said lands, except as noted; and there are no mechanic's liens, attachments, lis pendens or other liens or notices entered against said land, except as noted."

Eight days later, October 11, 1900, on the strength of these documents, Mrs. Cameron transferred the said lot to Mrs. Deitz. As will be noticed, this abstract does not mention the dam. And it was not until four years later,

when the Deitzes took possession of their Cameron property, that the subsequent survey of the land showed that the dam was included in the property.

Company's Blunder.

When Mrs. Deitz purchased the property, the company, believing that the dam was included in the forty acres upon which no taxes had been paid, bluffed the county clerk into refusing Mrs. Cameron permission to redeem these forty acres, and later bought the lot themselves.

When they found that the survey had included the dam within Deitz's property they sent their own surveyor, who went thoroughly over the ground and thereafter told Deitz that the dam was on his property; that the company would pay him handsomely for its use and that he would return with their offer within a week. So he did, but all the company offered for the use of the dam was \$500, which Deitz, of course, refused to accept.

Instead Mr. Deitz asked for the legal rates of flowage, ten cents per thousand feet, for logs run through the dam, including the same price for some seventy-five to eighty million feet of logs run through the dam by the company since he became its owner. This offer the company spurned.

To show how fair Mr. Deitz has been in his efforts to have the question settled, although he firmly believes he is the lawful owner of the dam and although his search of the Sawyer county records have failed to reveal any reservations as regards the dam, yet from the beginning of the trouble he has expressed his readiness to receive officers of the law, business men, lumber jacks or whomsoever should like to discuss the subject with him, and has further declared that if anyone, not only the lumber company, but anybody, can prove to him that he is not the rightful owner of the dam, he is ready at any time to surrender it to its rightful owner.

Indeed, for peace's sake, he has been willing to dispose of his little holdings for a reasonable compensation, which

the companies have never offered to give. But he would not be intimidated or be robbed. Can any decent man blame him for this? Ought he not to be honored and upheld in his brave but unequal struggle for justice?

The Struggle for the Protection of Cameron Dam.

Next, the company tried to force their logs through the dam. Then Deitz and his boys drove off the company's employes and threatened to shoot them if they attempted to force a passage. When the company found that they could neither browbeat nor intimidate Deitz, they resorted to the usual means employed by great trusts and corporations in such cases. They applied for an injunction. Although Deitz had not been notified, still the judge, John C. Parish, of the Fifteenth judicial district, readily granted the company's demand and enjoined Deitz from in any way interfering with the company's use of the dam.

The late Sheriff Peterson was ordered to serve that injunction. Recognizing its foulness, he did not serve it, but simply brought it with the mail to Deitz, telling him that his mail included an injunction. Upon examining the document, Deitz found it to be utterly worthless, for it was neither signed by the judge who issued it, nor by the sheriff, who should have served it, and besides, the injunction, such as it was, was not on Mrs. Deitz, the record owner of the land, but upon her husband, John F. Deitz. Naturally, Mr. Deitz gave it no consideration.

On May 3, 1904, Deputy Sheriff Clark came to Deitz's home. He had no warrant, but tried his best to induce Deitz to go with him to Hayward. Knowing too well that if he did so he would be arrested and the company left free hand to use his dam as they saw fit, Deitz refused to go.

On May 10 ex-Sheriff Giblin, his arch-enemy since the spring election at Hayward in 1902, accompanied by another enemy of Deitz's, William Elliot, and a posse of heavily armed men, started for Deitz's home to capture "the outlaw." Deitz had been apprised of their coming.

After an exchange of some harmless shots, Giblin and his gang retired. When later, Deitz met Sheriff Peterson he denounced Giblin's outrage and Peterson explained that he had neither connection nor knowledge of it before it occurred.

Deitz continued to prevent the sluicing of the company's logs through his dam. So again they went to their friend, Judge Parish, and he granted them another ex-parte injunction, June 5, 1904, "perpetually" enjoining Deitz "from in any manner interfering with the plaintiffs or their assignees in operating the dam, which the evidence shows they own, and which the law says they may control."

Parish's Infamous Injunction.

In granting the injunction, basing his remarks upon Deitz having ignored the worthless paper called an injunction, previously granted and by force resisting the outrageous attack by ex-Sheriff Giblin, the Judge Pilate washed his hands of responsibility for the results of violence which his decision invoked by saying, "By the records of this case, the defendant, John F. Deitz, was summoned to appear in this court. He does not appear. By the records of this case he was duly served by an order from the court (this Judge Parish had the hardihood to say, notwithstanding the fact that he himself had reprimanded Peterson, fined him \$1,000 and sentenced him to three months in jail for contempt of court for failing to serve that very injunction) ordering him not to molest nor in any way to interfere with the plaintiff in the enjoyment of their rights of running the river and using the dam for floating logs down the stream.

"The defendant has no defense, as far as this court is concerned, at this time; he has absolutely refused to appear in court or make any demands upon this court for any relief under any pretended claim which he has, or may pretend to have to the dam in question. He keeps beyond the reach of courts; he keeps his hand upon his rifle, and defies every man in this community and every man in the state of Wisconsin.

“He says, ‘I have possession of this, no matter how I have obtained it, and I am going to enforce that possession, and if any person attempts in any manner to interfere with me in my (apparently unlawful) possession I will kill him.’ Now, any man who makes statements of that kind—and that is proven here by the witnesses—simply defies the law, and he is no more entitled to respect than any anarchist who defies government, defies law and defies order, for society is entirely dependent upon people submitting to the law.

“ ‘And I will say here that if there is not enough strength in the officers of the law and the people of Sawyer county, the state of Wisconsin is bound to lend its aid in putting down lawlessness, come where it will, and if there is not enough power in the state, the government of the United States, upon being legally called upon for aid, will grant it.’ ”

That Anarchist Order.

After granting that unspeakable injunction this most “learned and righteous” judge, who resides at Ashland, sixty miles from Hayward, upon his own responsibility, wholly outside of the law, made a requisition upon Harry Adley, commander of Company D of the militia, requiring him to send an armed detachment of militiamen to Hayward and thence go to Cameran Dam and take Deitz dead or alive.

This Adley refused to do, informing Judge Parish that he took no orders from anyone save the state authorities. Thereupon this poser for law and order engaged some bums of the company to take guns from the armory and bring them to Hayward.

This they did, but on arriving there they could find no one willing to take charge of Judge Parish’s anarchist expedition. So they had to bring their guns home again.

Reader, in view of such outrages, can you blame Deitz for not trusting himself and his case to a judge like that?

That injunction was never served. Under guise of seeking to serve it on the “outlaw” mock attempts were made



JOHN F. DIETZ AND FAMILY OF CAMERON DAMN

Stanley	Leslie J.	Myra M.	John F.	Clarence H.
(Dead)	Hattie E.	Johnnie F. Jr.		Helen M.

with armed posses so as to convey to the public the idea that Deitz was the most dangerous character. The outrages to which Deitz has been subjected are numerous, and only some of the most damnable can here be referred to.

For instance, a former friend of Deitz named Weisenbach, by promises of golden reward, was induced to betray his friend. He did his best to entice him where he could be taken, but Deitz saw through the scheme. Later, thinking that Deitz did not know his falseness, they arrested Weisenbach, expecting that Deitz's loyalty would bring him to the rescue, and when he failed to fall in the trap they denounced him for treachery to his friend.

Even his mail was tampered with. The messenger was waylaid by Ray Van Alstyne and one Wynn. They took the mail to Winter, opened it and threw it down on the back bar of the saloon. Deitz reported the robbery to the postoffice department, and an inspector was assigned to the case. It went before the court at La Crosse.

There the assistant United States District Attorney declared that the evidence was faulty and the case was dismissed. Said Deitz pointedly in this connection: "Why the case was dismissed, I leave the public to judge."

The most daring and contemptible of these lawless outrages was the attack upon Deitz July 26, 1906. The Sawyer county sheriff had not been able to find in Hayward men low and cowardly enough to do his work of intended murder, so he sent to Milwaukee for thugs, dressed them in Wisconsin militia uniforms and took them to Cameron Dam, hoping thus to deceive and overawe Deitz.

But, said the Milwaukee Journal at the time, "Deitz could not be deceived; he saw the wolf in the lion's skin and he punctured the skin of the wolf with a bullet from a Winchester." Of the deputies, the Journal says: "They ran when firing began. They ran faster, abandoning a wounded companion, when some one yelled that Deitz was after them."

The wounded man was a Milwaukee thug of Austrian birth, named Rogich. He had shot Clarence Deitz in the



Photo by Klein, Milw.

Clarence Deitz

The young "Outlaw" whose sole offense was that Rogich failed to kill him.

head, and when his father saw Clarence fall he fired in the direction the shot came from and winged the thug. Do you blame him?

In his place would you not have acted as he did? Wasn't his act one of lawful self-defense? And yet, John Deitz is to stand trial for wilful assault with intent to kill because he protected his family from murder.

In 1907 Representative Frank Weber introduced in the legislature a resolution calling for a committee to investigate the Deitz Cameron Dam trouble and report the conditions just as they found them.

This committee was simply to be appointed to report upon the conditions, not to decide the right or wrong of the case. And yet, the legislature, by a vote of 42 to 23, turned that resolution down on the ground that the legislature had no jurisdiction in such matters!

CHAPTER IV

Deitz' Letters.

Abstracts from a long letter by Mr. John F. Deitz, published in the Osceola Sun, Oct. 25, 1906, showing the character of the man, and giving his own version of the manner in which he had been treated by the Sawyer county authorities up to that time:

"I have been termed an 'outlaw.' Well, if I am, that occupation would appear to be more honorable than law and order. I have never paraded in disguise or under an assumed name; I have never tried to gain any advantages on false pretenses, or 'bellied' around through the grass, as the agents of the so-called department of justice have done; I have never been afraid to meet any man or body of men face to face, and I have never been ashamed to tell the truth about what I have done, as they have; and I have never struck a blow without warning, as Rogich did—even a rattlesnake wouldn't do that."

Re Injunctions and Warrants.

"If there are any warrants out for me they have grown out of this controversy, and I see by newspaper accounts that I have been tried and condemned (in my absence) and denounced as an 'outlaw,' 'anarchist,' 'traitor,' etc., by two circuit judges and one United States district judge, for the same old song, and all contrary to the constitution, the foundation of all law.

"Now, these judges in their oath of office promised to support the constitution. Have they been misquoted by the press,

or have they so far forgotten their dignity as to perjure themselves?

"Are we in a position to point the finger of scorn at what we call the autocracy of Russia, when a great deal of what we call business under our system isn't as honorable as highway robbery? 'Rhode Island—a State For Sale,' by Lincoln Steffens, describes the management of Sawyer County to a dot, even to the amount of territory—they each occupy 38 townships.

"When Mr. Irvine was here July 20, 1904, he offered to let this controversy be settled by any circuit judge in the state, and especially recommended Judge Vinje as a good, honest, reliable judge. I asked Mr. Irvine what was the use of bothering other people with our affairs? I said, 'You are the manager of the Chippewa Lumber and Boom Company and I am manager here; why can't we settle this ourselves? I have shown you our papers to prove that we have a clear title to this land. All you have to do is to show your papers and if you have the right title you can have the dam without a word, as I do not want what doesn't belong to me.' Although there have been numerous representatives of the company here since that time, they have never produced the scratch of a pen to prove that they owned the dam.

"A farmer by the name of Rossler bought the land on which the Shaw dam is located, and in the spring of 1905 he notified the company that the Shaw dam was his property, and they immediately settled with Mr. Rossler, giving him a tract of land and \$20 a month the year round for its use. Why didn't they shoot Mr. Rossler, the same as they have tried to do with me? Possibly they thought that it wouldn't look well to have a war with two different men over dams on the same stream at the same time.

That First Injunction.

"April 27 Sheriff Peterson came and handed me my mail and said: 'There is a copy of an injunction in it, but it don't amount to a damn; it's only a bluff.'

First Trap.

"On May 3 Fred Clarke came and coaxed me to go out with him to Hayward. He said if I didn't they would send in an armed posse to shoot me, and said further: 'I am telling you as a friend, John, if you don't go out with me they will kill you.' This naturally put me on the alert, and I watched the road to see if anybody came, and if so, who, and how many.

First Assassination Attempt.

"On May 9, 1904, ex-Sheriff Giblin and his gang, composed mostly of the driving crew and non-residents of Sawyer County, came armed to the teeth. I was waiting to count four, when No. 3, Giblin, reached up to the open space with his gun to his shoulder and shot four shots at me as fast as he could work the lever. The bullets struck the knoll right in front of my face and threw dirt in my eyes. I shot one shot at him, but as my eyes were full of dirt I could hardly see, and consequently missed him.

Second Assassination Attempt, July 25, 1906.

"The facts about the battle of July 25, 1906, are these: We hauled in a load of hay before dinner. When we had about half

the second load on we heard someone call dinner. This was about 12 o'clock and my wife had said she would have dinner about half past twelve. After dinner we hurried to unload the hay, as it was threatening rain. Clarence was on the load, Leslie and myself in the barn, Myra driving the team on the hay fork and my wife pulling back the rope. Just as we had the load off, my wife noticed a cow going south with her head up smelling. She told Helen to go and see what the cow was looking at. Helen ran down to the brow of the hill and saw men with guns, then she came back and told us. I took my gun and went to the brow of the hill, but could see no one. I called: 'Get off of my place.' I soon saw two men crawling through the grass, going south toward the camp. They crawled about 200 yards until they came to a bunch of logs, then they got up and walked until they were in the woods close to the camp, which is about 120 rods from our house. I followed down the path on the side hill and kept ordering them off. I was about 70 rods from the house, in sight of the dam and camp, when Leslie came down and said: 'Pa, come back; there are more in there yet. We saw two crawl out west since you left and cross the river.' When I got back I said I guessed they were all gone. Clarence insisted that there were more in there and said he heard them breaking brush. I said: 'If you think there are any more in there why don't you go and drive them off?' Clarence went down the hill about three rods from where I stood, and had gone by Rogich, when I saw a streak of smoke. Clarence threw up his hands and fell on his back. We heard the report of a gun about ten seconds before Rogich shot Clarence; there was a shot fired down near the camp. As soon as Clarence fell, I called to my wife and told her that they had killed him, thence I commenced shooting into the bunch of willows where that shot came from.

"In a few seconds another shot came from the same spot and Leslie dodged, and said the bullet came so close to his face he felt it burn. I told Leslie there was no use dodging after the bullet had gone by, and he commenced shooting into the clump of willows. Then they began shooting at us from across the river—I should judge there were eight or ten of them, and they must have emptied their guns, for their firing ceased about the time we emptied our guns. By this time Clarence had crawled up to where we were and we all started for the house, which was about ten rods distant. When we were about half way to the house the firing commenced again from across the river, and we could see little clouds of dust where the bullets struck in front of the house, close to my wife and the children. I saw Hedrington, the company foreman, swinging his arms and heard him shouting: 'Shoot the sons of ———.' As soon as I reloaded my gun I went out and took a shot at Hedrington, for he was the only one in sight, and he 'ducked,' and that ended the bottle. At this time Rogich appeared, the first time on the bunch of logs that I mentioned before, and Leslie shot at him and he fell as though he had been struck with an ax. That was the one that struck him in the neck, for he was south of us and going southwest, and the bullet must have struck him on the left side of the neck. He then crawled about 50 yards through the grass, got up and walked away in plain sight for about 100 rods. We didn't shoot at him any more, for he walked as if he had all the load he wanted to carry. I only saw four of that party and think I could have killed three of them had I so desired; two of them disappeared before the shooting began.

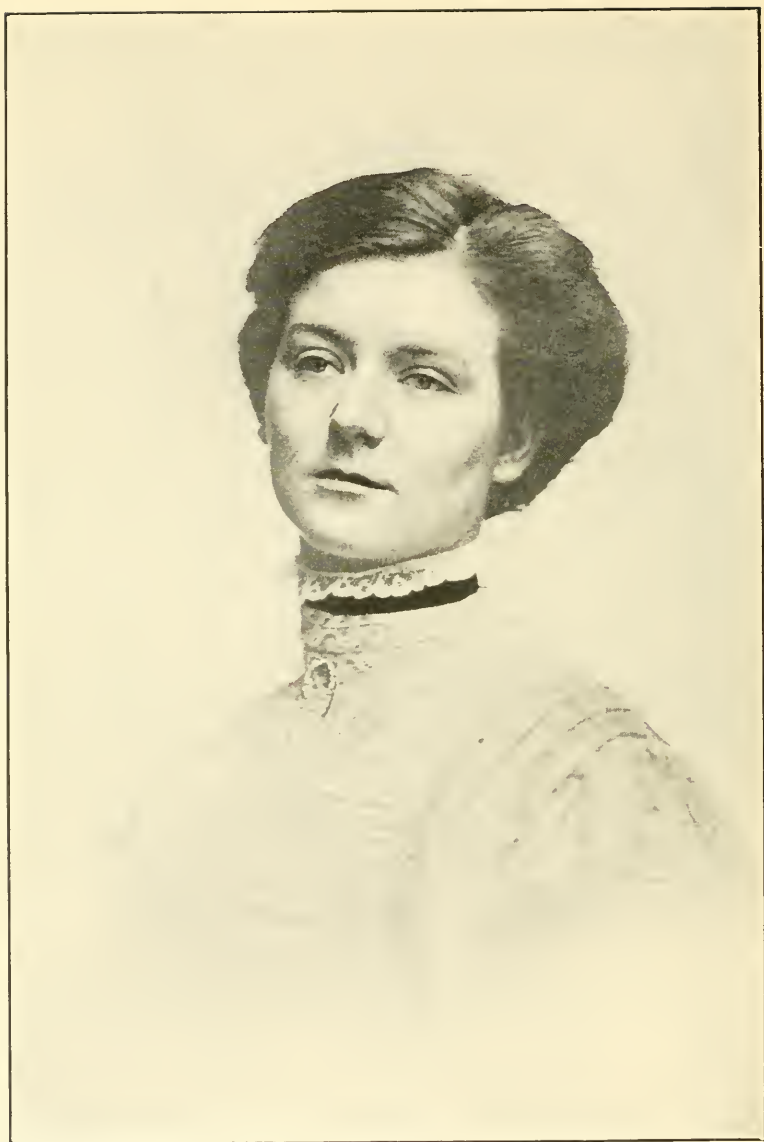


Photo by Klein; Milw.

Myra Deitz

The "expert shot" who never fired a gun in her life.

"After an altercation along the highway Giblin and Elliot came up to the company's driving camp near the farm and were standing near the dam. I was behind a stump watching them and my boys were building fence up on the side hill. Elliot drew his rifle three times to shoot one of the boys, but each time Giblin pulled his gun down. When Elliot returned to Hayward he told several of the residents that if Giblin had let him shoot one of the boys that would have brought me out to Hayward. Elliot was severely rebuked by several residents of Hayward at the time."

Deitz a Man of Peace.

"I fail to see where I would be the gainer by shedding any blood, except in self-defense.

"That I do not want to kill anybody is shown by the fact that while hundreds of persons have come here and persecuted us in every conceivable manner, Rogich was the first one to get shot.

"Wouldn't I have been as desirous of killing him after he shot Clarence as before he had fired a shot? If I had wanted to kill him I could have shot him twenty times before he was out of sight.

"He only got his just dues and received punishment worse than death; he may possibly repent for his sins. If Rogich had returned in a peaceable manner after he was wounded he would have received better treatment at our hands than he did from his partners in crime.

"Justice" at Chippewa Falls.

"At the trial of Weisenbach in Chippewa Falls he was convicted and sentenced to twelve years as an accomplice of mine. The only witness who testified that Weisenbach was with me when the alleged firing was done was impeached by seven witnesses, who swore that the witness, Edwin Geog, alias Winn, had a bad reputation for truth and veracity in the community in which he had resided. His testimony was disputed by Weisenbach himself, and the judge in his charge to the jury did not make any reference to this impeachment.

Company's Chief Attorney's Work.

"Connor was the first one to proclaim me an 'outlaw,' and he is at it yet. It was Connor who furnished \$500 to defray the expenses of the first armed mob that came here.

"I would like to have the wise man from Chippewa Falls explain how Sheriff Gylland could afford to spend \$500 on his last raid on a salary of \$1,000 a year.

Sheep in Wolf's Clothing.

"Last winter was the first schooling my children have had since they came to this country—nearly six years ago—although there is annually expended about \$35,000 for school and graft purposes on only eighteen schools. A young lady from Rice Lake taught five months in our house, and she must calculate to follow the occupation of teaching the young idea how to shoot, for she appropriated a lot of my cartridges and searched our bureau drawer through from top to bottom, evidently for the purpose of getting our papers, but she didn't succeed, for they were in a safe place."

Mr. Deitz, hearing of the introduction of this resolution, wrote the following characteristic letter to Representative Weber:

"My Dear Sir: Please accept the sincere gratitude of myself and family for your kindness in introducing that resolution for investigation, as it is high time this corporation conspiracy is shown up to the public in its true light.

"Of course the corporation will object to anything that is fair or to anyone being on that committee who isn't 'safe,' or whose honor is above the glitter of gold.

"I would be very much pleased to meet you, as one of that committee or otherwise, as I have nothing to conceal and a whole lot to reveal of how we have been held in abject corporation slavery for the past three years. They have also added insult to injury by blackening me as an outlaw, anarchist, etc., because I had the hardihood to stand on my constitutional rights. Hoping to hear from you in the near future, I am

"Yours very truly,

"JOHN F. DEITZ."

Here is another letter from Mr. Deitz, a little later, throwing a vivid light upon the character of the man and the methods and means used to blacken his name and rob him of his rightful possessions:

"Winter, Wis., June 30, 1907.

"Mr. H. C. Riley,

"Secretary Winneconne Old Home Week Association.

"Dear Sir: Your kind invitation to attend the homecoming is at hand, and in reply will say, would be very much pleased to be with you on that particular occasion, but duty compels my presence at home to protect my home and family from a ruthless band of would-be robbers and assassins at the instance of the richest lumber company in the world.

"I was born at Winneconne, April 4, 1861, and my wife, Hattie E. (Young) Deitz, was born in the town of Clayton, December 26, 1866. That you will all have a good time and fair weather without any misfortune, is the most fervent prayer of your humble servant, but while enjoying your festivities and reading that immortal document, the Declaration of Independence, don't lose sight of the fact that within the borders of Wisconsin myself and family are being held in abject corporation slavery and are being blackened and persecuted by

nefarious methods known only to satan and his imps, without one word of protest from the state authorities, and I can truthfully say that in Wisconsin justice cannot be had when the money powers forbid, and that law and order have been prostituted to assist the grasping tentacles of the corporation.

"I am going to the stake if necessary in the defense of the sacred and constitutional rights of life, liberty and property, for my trust is in Him that doeth all things well. The Allseeing Eye has had a watchful care over us and prevented our untimely death, for hundreds of bullets have been fired at us from ambush in the past three years. In conclusion,

"I ask the favor that this letter be read before the people there assembled, and that some action be taken whereby some competent or reliable person or persons will come here and make a thorough investigation and proclaim it to the world, that the public may know the truth, so that I cannot be branded as a felon, should I lose my life in the contest. With kind regards of myself and family to all true lovers of liberty and equity, I am,

Yours faithfully,

"JOHN DEITZ."

Let me cite another letter from Mr. Deitz showing the thorough knavery of the lumber company:

"Cameron Dam, Wis., Dec. 23, 1907.

"To the Editor of The Osceola Sun.

"Dear Sir: On June 10, 1907, one W. E. Moses made his first appearance on Thornapple, claiming to be a direct agent from F. Weyerhaeuser, with authority to settle up all the differences with us.

"He asked me not to write anything for publication, promising to have all indictments quashed and to clear away every cloud that hung over the Deitz family, and has even went so far as to ask my consent to the pardon of Weisenbach and to having District Attorney McNamara removed from office and S. J. Williams appointed in his place, with the excuse that Williams was friendly to me and would see that I got my just dues.

"Every time Moses comes here he has some excuse that he is doing his best and has an influential person after Parish to drive him in line. Moses invited our whole family up to his camp for dinner one Sunday. If we had gone I am satisfied that when we returned we would have found our home in ashes.



"The fact is, Moses hasn't tried to do any of the hundred and one things he has promised, but is simply trying to cut our throats with a feather, until he thinks it is time to use the sword, and I had the satisfaction of telling him so last evening.

"On September 16, 1907, Moses came here and paid me my wages, \$1,717, for work on Price Dam, also saying that within sixty days he would have everything settled and cleared up so that we would be safe to go and come as we pleased, and all the time his hirelings have been sneaking around our field looking for a sure shot at us.

"When the head beatlers of the company at Chippewa Falls denied that Moses has paid me any money, I asked Moses to give me a copy of the receipt. Moses said: 'You don't need a copy; you have got the money.' I told Moses that I didn't think it necessary at the time of settlement to have a copy, but as the company was denying a settlement, it was as much as to say that he wasn't their agent.

"Then Moses agreed to get me an exact typewritten copy, but whether he will do so or not, remains to be seen. Two weeks before Moses paid me my wages he came here and scattered a lot of money on our table, saying there is \$1,720 for your wages, if you will sign a contract that it removes all bones of contention.

"I told Moses that I couldn't accept my wages by selling my birthright, and that his company owed me \$8,000 for sluicing, according to law, and that results show they blew out the dam for the purpose of getting a million and a half of logs off our land.

"After looking over our papers Moses admitted that we had absolute title to the dam, and that he told Weyerhauser so, and that Weyerhauser said then Mr. Deitz has been wronged and it has got to be made right, but so far results show that Weyerhauser has millions for conspiracy to murder, but hasn't money to pay his honest debts. The reason he is so bold, he knows he has every function of government under his thumb.

"For four long years myself and family have been the targets for conspiracy, blackmailing and bullets of the land pirates and timber wolves. Now, dear reader, isn't this a great condition to rear a family of children under in a land of liberty? If such a state of affairs is allowed to continue, the stars and stripes should be hung at half mast to mourn the death of our nation, for the grasping tentacles of the corporation has liberty by the throat.

"Yours truly,

"JOHN F. DEITZ."

The Shooting of Myra.

Finally, last summer, when Sheriff Madden at last saw a chance for revenge for his humiliation in the election of 1902, he placed an ambush, together with Thorbahn and Van Alstyne, for catching Deitz on his weekly trip to Winter, the nearest town to Cameron Dam.

The shooting of Myra Deitz and the brutal treatment she was afterwards subjected to by Sheriff Madden and his chief deputy, Thorbahn, and Van Alstyne, the mail robber, cannot be matched for cruelty and wanton brutality by any events in civilization except the Russian government's treatment of the Nihilists.

Darkest Wisconsin under the lumber trust is as barbarously treated as darkest Russia under czarism.

A little more than ten weeks ago, on Saturday, the 1st of October, Clarence, Leslie and Myra Deitz were going to Winter, the nearest town to Cameron Dam, to make their usual weekly purchases for the family. They had no suspicions of danger, they felt happy and were singing, having no arms of any kind.

They were about half way to Winter when the horses showed excitement, and the next moment two shots were fired, followed in quick succession by ten or a dozen more. The first shot took effect, Clarence being hit in the arm, but he had enough presence of mind to hold the horses. Myra received a bullet in the left side, which later examination of the wound showed to have passed diagonally through the body, grazing the kidneys and passing out after splintering the spine. When shot she fell over the dashboard.

Leslie jumped from the wagon to run home for help. His doing so probably saved his sister and Clarence, for the official highwaymen then sent their bullets after him. It is said that they fired more than a hundred shots after him, and yet he escaped unhurt.

Then the three marksmen rushed up to the rig, and while the brave Thorbahn covered Myra with two six-shooters,

and Van Alstyne courageously covered Clarence with his Winchester, that nervy Sheriff Madden, who afterwards in court declared that he had neither ordered nor seen the shooting because he was back in the woods at the time, clapped handcuffs on Myra and Clarence. Clarence is to be tried, among other things, for resisting arrest. This resistance consisted in demanding to see the warrant, and when Madden did not produce it, protesting that he had no right to arrest them without a warrant.

When the case came up in court Madden admitted that he had no warrant, and it was three days before he got one, ex post facto, to be served on these two innocent people.

Then the three official guardians of law and order took charge of the outfit. Continually threatening the two wounded occupants with their guns, they put Myra at the bottom, and then drove on regardless of her pleas to drive easy. As she bled profusely, she longed for water, and on passing a creek she begged for a drink, but Madden told her she could wait until they reached Winter.

When they got there Madden left Thorbahn in charge of Myra and took Clarence to Hayward jail. Thorbahn brought Myra to the hotel and, revolver in hand, made her sit on a chair bleeding, although there was a bed in the room, and she begged to be allowed to rest on it. There she sat a long while before the physician, Dr. Burns, arrived. When he took Myra into another room, Thorbahn tried to force his way in, but was stopped by the doctor.

Dr. Burns, however, merely applied a dry bandage. When Myra asked him to examine her wound, because she felt the pain of the wound in her back as well as in her side, he refused, and said she had merely received a surface flesh wound.

Thus she remained with this legal cerberus watching her until Monday, when he took her to the hospital at Ashland, some fifty miles distant.

The physician there seeing the careless way she had been attended to was horrified, and found that an operation

would be necessary to save her life. If properly cared for at Winter probably no operation would have been required.

We quote Ashland News:

That Criminal Sheriff.

At the time, Sheriff Madden proclaimed to the newspapers that Miss Deitz was an expert marksman, fully as dangerous as any of the family when behind the gun. Miss Deitz declared that she had never fired a gun in her life and that therefore the warrant which Madden read to her was absolutely ridiculous, and now Attorney Lamoreaux, in his statement for the persecution, admits that after investigation they have found that Miss Deitz never used a rifle. Commenting upon this, the Ashland News, December 6, says: "Miss Deitz was dangerously shot by an officer of Sawyer county and brutally handcuffed after being wounded.

"She was confined for weeks in a hospital with a wound that gave her great suffering, and yet on a sick bed, had to endure the humiliation of having a deputy sheriff stand guard over her, opening all her personal, private mail and refusing to admit friends to her room, and after all this experience, which it is claimed has been taken in the name of the law, the announcement is suddenly made by the prosecution that they have no case against Miss Deitz and no ground whatever for the terrible wrongs they have inflicted upon her.

"It certainly seems incredible to believe that such injustice would be worked out against an American woman, and yet no suggestion of punishment is made for such actions."

Sawyer county is likely to have to pay heavily for that outrage. It would have been well for them if they had followed the advice of the Milwaukee Journal some two or three years ago and paid "Deitz his claim against the company rather than stand the expenses that are likely to be incurred before the row is settled."

The Surrender.

Not satisfied with having shot down a poor, innocent girl in cold blood, Sheriff Madden shortly gathered a large posse and went to Cameron Dam to take Deitz dead or alive.

The shooting of Myra had roused the public, and he was compelled to parley for surrender. From sad experience Deitz well knew, and by this time the readers also know, what chance of justice he would have should he surrender unconditionally. So he demanded as a condition that all charges against him would be dismissed.

Governor Davidson was by public opinion compelled to interfere, so it was agreed to waive all charges save that of the wounding of Rogish. Of course, that left the real situation just where it was before, and so Deitz refused.

The deputies had surrounded Deitz's little cabin and began a fusillade against its brave defender. It is said that more than a thousand shots were fired before they surrendered, and it is little short of a miracle that they escaped unhurt and uninjured. Everything is now centering upon the conviction of John F. Deitz.

Appeal to the Public.

Let no one imagine for an instant that the righteousness of his cause will carry him safely through the now commenced trial, secure his honorable acquittal and restore him to his loving, loyal family. It is an open secret that nearly all the circuit judges in Northern Wisconsin owe their positions to the influence of the lumber trust. It is even charged that in its infamous attacks upon John F. Deitz, the lumber trust has been advised by a member of a high judicial tribunal of the state.

The fact that the legislature could turn down a simple resolution asking for an investigation on the flimsy pretext that they "possessed no jurisdiction" in such matters, shows where the legislature stands on the question.

The further fact that the sheriff with two other brutes could ambush and shoot down a poor girl and afterwards treat her as though she were the most execrable criminal on earth, without governor, attorney general and other state officials demanding their arrest and trial, shows what power the lumber trust exercises over the official administration of the state.

No doubt there are men in this state and indeed throughout the country who wish to see justice done, but all their efforts to secure for Deitz a fair trial will be in vain unless an overwhelming general sentiment throughout the state and the states secures him that boon.

Unless this can be done, Deitz is doomed. He may be sentenced to pass the remainder of his life in a felon's cell for no other reason than that he defended his family and himself in his own home from official and officially hired assassins.

Wisconsin citizens, are you willing that such a crime shall be committed in the name of the state of Wisconsin?

Citizens of the United States, the cruelties and brutalities perpetrated in the name of law and order by the officials of Sawyer county, as well as the courts, at the behest of the seven hundred million dollar robber lumber trust, if allowed to eventuate in the condemnation of John F. Deitz because of his lawful, righteous and brave defense of his property and his family, will be an indelible disgrace, indelibly not only to Wisconsin, but the United States, before the whole world.

Are you going to put that stain upon the starry banner of the states by not doing your utmost to see to it that John F. Deitz is secured an absolutely fair trial by the courts?

At an enthusiastic mass meeting in the Auditorium, Milwaukee, Sunday, Dec. 11, 1910, after Clarence and Myra Deitz had thrilled the audience by their horrible, vivid description of their miraculous escape from death in the murderous outrages committed upon them by Sawyer County officials, the following resolution,

presented by Dr. Axel Gustafson, was unanimously passed by a rising vote and copies of said resolution have been forwarded to the Governor, Attorney General and trial Judge:

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY UNANIMOUS RISING
VOTE AT MASS MEETING AT AUDITOR-
IUM, MILWAUKEE, DEC. 11, 1910.

Recognizing that it is a constitutional right of every person in this state and the United States, when accused of crime, to receive a fair and impartial hearing of his case in the courts, and obtain statutory judgment according to evidence presented at the trial.

Recognizing that a fair and impartial trial and judgment necessitates an unbiased judge and an unprejudiced jury, with an open mind, free to weigh all evidence presented, solely on its merits.

WHEREAS, Indisputable data, in the history of the Deitz cases, extending over six years, show that lawless persecutions and outrages have repeatedly been committed against John F. Deitz and the members of his family by the officials and judges of Sawyer County;

WHEREAS, The Chippewa Falls and the Mississippi Valley Companies of the Weyerhaeuser Lumber Trust have been the prime instigators and movers in these lawless acts;

WHEREAS, The inhabitants of Sawyer County, almost to a man are employes or dependents of said lumber company;

WHEREAS, Under such a state of affairs manifestly it is impossible to secure a fair and impartial trial with a jury in Sawyer County to try the Deitz cases; and

WHEREAS, Similar, vital objections, and for the same reasons, lie against the submission of the Deitz cases to jurors drawn in any other of the northern counties of the state; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That it is the sense of this body of citizens in mass meeting assembled in the Auditorium of Milwaukee, that unless a change of venue be granted to a county free from domination of the baneful influences of the lumber companies, it will be impossible for John F. Deitz or any of his family to obtain a fair and impartial trial. And that while we are perfectly confident that under just and fair conditions, Attorney Rubin will be sure to se-

cure a verdict according to the evidence; we are equally certain that no counsel, no matter how able or numerous, could secure justice for Deitz in Sawyer County under any conditions, and therefore we affirm it as our belief that if this trial be held in Sawyer County it will eventually result in a miscarriage of justice involving a grave blow to public faith in our judiciary, far reaching dangers to the peace of the state and a nindellible stain upon the good name and reputation of Wisconsin abroad.

Copies of these resolutions have been sent to Governor Davidson, Attorney General Gilbert, Chief Justice Winslow of the Supreme Court, and the presiding Judge Reid at Hayward.

JAN 9 1911

One copy del. to Cat. Div.

MS 17 1811



DIAGRAM OF THE DEITZ PREMISES.